

SSS – Silver Sagewort Dwarf-shrubland (Map Unit 15)



Photo credit: Jim Von Loh



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The Silver Sagewort Dwarf-shrubland (SSS, Map Unit 15) represents the *Artemisia frigida* / *Bouteloua gracilis* (Silver Sagewort / Blue Grama) Dwarf-shrubland Association.

This association is the result of grazing and disturbance by prairie dogs as *Artemisia frigida* is unpalatable or less palatable. It is distributed according to soils appropriate for burrowing activity. These deeper soils are typically deposited in drainages, swales (interfluvies), and along lower hill slopes, which are found at the lower and mid-elevations (8350–8650 feet) within the monument. The slopes are gentle and moderately well drained. The dwarf-shrub density is typically related to the age (permanence) of the colony at a particular site. Adjacent to the monument, this dwarf-shrubland not only occupies prairie dog towns, but also heavily grazed pastures in the vicinity of livestock watering ponds.

SSS – Silver Sagewort Dwarf-shrubland (Map Unit 15) Continued

Photo Signatures

This association is not distinctive in the natural color or color infrared aerial photography due to their coarser resolution and smaller scale. However, it can be distinguished using the black and white aerial photography. The disturbed soil next to the prairie dog burrows appears as small white dots against a light to medium gray background. The dots form a random pattern and are fairly evenly dispersed. The texture of all features is smooth. Prairie dog colonies that are densely occupied typically have vegetative cover values less than 40%. The majority of the ground cover is either bare or herbaceous litter. The dwarf-shrubs have a foliar cover of 20–40% and other low vegetation contributes only 5–40%. Photo SSS-1 and SSS-2 (both black and white) were taken in October 1997.

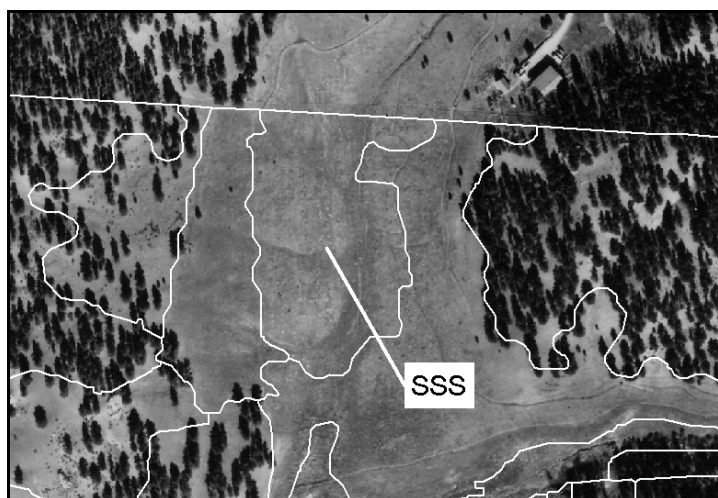
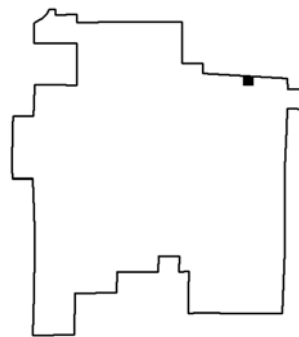


Photo SSS-1



Location of **SSS-1** within
National Monument

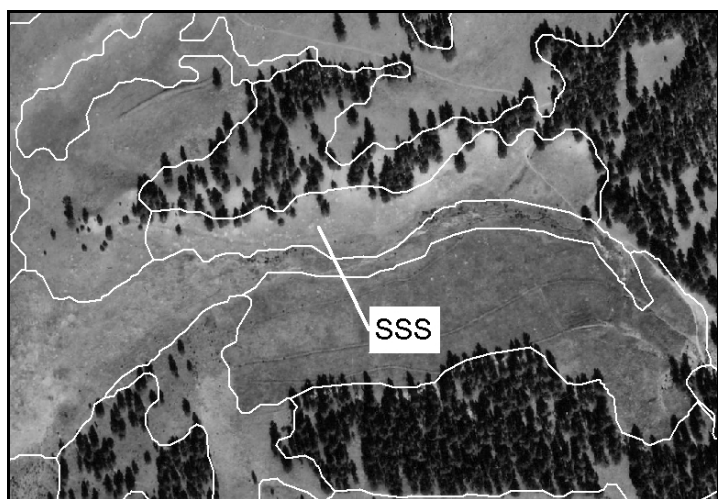
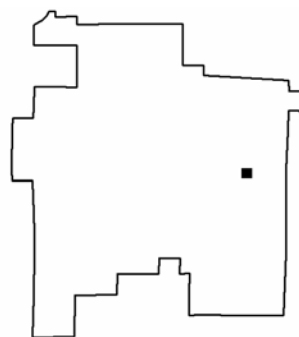


Photo SSS-2



Location of **SSS-2** within
National Monument

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Area Report for SSS Map Unit

Number of Polygons: 10

Number of Hectares: 8.3

Number of Acres: 20.5

Average Size: 0.8 hectares, 2.1 acres

Accuracy Assessment Results for SSS Map Unit

The Silver Sagewort Dwarf-shrubland Map Unit was assessed at 87% for producers' accuracy (confidence interval 69-100%) and at 54% users' accuracy (confidence interval 35-73%).